

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A beverage base ~~that is substantially non-alcoholic and comprising less than 0.05% ethanol and~~ a fermented coffee component comprising coffee aroma, which fermented coffee component, has a modulated coffee aroma with fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma.

Claim 2 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the coffee component is selected from the group consisting of coffee extract, coffee aroma, and coffee extract from which a portion of coffee aroma has been removed.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A beverage base according to claim 2, wherein the coffee aroma is a distillate of coffee aroma compounds from a coffee component selected from the group consisting of coffee grounds and coffee extracts.

Claim 4 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, which comprises at least 0.2 % coffee solids by weight of the beverage base.

Claim 5 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, which comprises between 0.01% and 2% coffee aroma by weight of coffee solids in the beverage base.

Claim 6 (canceled):

Claim 7 (currently amended): A beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the beverage base does not have ~~an increased level~~higher amounts of acetic acid resulting from fermentation than was present in the coffee component prior to fermentation.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A beverage base according to claim 1, the beverage base ~~comprises~~ comprising an artificial ~~fermented coffee~~-aroma component.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, comprising a coffee aroma having a ratio of 2-and 3-methylbutanol over 2-and 3-methylbutanal of greater than 1.

Claim 10 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, comprising a coffee aroma having a ratio of thioacetates over thiols of greater than 0.5.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1 having foam properties sufficient to cause foam to be created on the upper surface of the beverage when prepared.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the beverage base is a concentrate selected from the group consisting of a liquid beverage concentrate and a soluble beverage concentrate.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A ready-to-drink beverage ~~that is substantially non-alcoholic and comprising~~ less than 0.05% ethanol and a fermented coffee component comprising coffee aroma, which fermented coffee component, has a modulated coffee aroma with fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A process for providing a coffee beverage base comprising

providing a coffee component comprising coffee aroma,

providing a micro-organism with an ability to ferment,

inoculating the coffee component with the micro-organism, and

subjecting the incubated coffee component to fermentation at a temperature below 22°C to generate a fermented coffee component that has a fruity and/or floral note due the fermentation of the coffee aroma, while controlling the fermentation conditions to substantially prevent the generation of alcohol and provide a ~~substantially non-alcoholic~~ coffee beverage base having less than 0.05% ethanol.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A process according to claim 14, comprising supplementing the coffee component with a carbohydrate effective to enhance the fermentation process.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A process according to claim 14, wherein the fermentation temperature is between 5 and 22°C.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A process according to claim 14, wherein the time of the fermentation is from 4 to 8 hours.

Claim 18 (previously presented): A fermented coffee aroma having fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma, wherein the aroma having a ratio of 2-and 3-methylbutanol over 2-and 3-methylbutanal of greater than 1.

Claim 19 (currently amended): ~~A-The~~ fermented coffee aroma according to claim 18, wherein the coffee has a ratio of thioacetates over thiols of greater than 0.5.

Claim 20 (currently amended): ~~A-The~~ process according to claim 14, wherein the fermentation temperature is between 8 to 22°C.

Claim 21 (currently amended): ~~A-~~The process according to claim 14, wherein the time of the fermentation is from 4 to 6 hours.